October 17, 2012

The Honorable Senator Tom Casperson
Transportation Committee Chair, 38th District
P.O. Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909-7536

Re: **Proposed Amendments to the Port Authority Statute**

Dear Senator Casperson:

In the midst of the greatest recession Southeast Michigan has seen since the Great Depression, my economic development team has been able to attract over $7 billion in new investments in the last three years. Many of these successes are attributable to the partnerships we have created with local communities and their economic development departments, chambers of commerce, private businesses, and universities, to name a few.

While I support the efforts of all port authorities to develop and facilitate investments in their ports, I am strongly concerned that some of the proposed amendments to the Port Authority statute (1978 PA 639), if passed, will result in the duplication of economic development efforts currently underway by other economic development entities. This creates confusion for companies and businesses looking to invest in Michigan and adds an unnecessary layer of bureaucracy to the development process.

I strongly support both the Detroit Economic Development Corporation's suggested changes to the proposed amendments to the Port Authority Statute (as set forth in its communication to you dated October 16, 2012), as well as its rationale. Wayne County and the City of Detroit have already established business development entities that address economic development activities and investments. As a time when we are aiming to enhance and streamline these efforts, the proposed amendments expanding the "authorized purposes" of a port authority will render them less efficient and less effective.

As we strive to make this State more development friendly for new jobs and new industries, permitting a port authority to engage in development activities outside of its current jurisdiction only makes sense if it adds value. Clearly here, it does not.

Sincerely,

Ray Byers